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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

RELEASE IN FULL

1999

16 MAY 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Attention:

SUBJECT :⁰ Investigation in Japan of Report on Suspicious
Actions of Gerald Lee Richards, Originally
Described as Resembling Suspected Assassin of
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

1. Reference is made to the report concerning the above subject made by telephone to Mr. at 0930 on 17 April 1968. Following is a full account of the investigation made in this case:

A. On 16 April 1968 a

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reported that one Gerald Lee Richards, who bore a general physical resemblance to the description given of the suspected assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had arrived in Japan about 15 April 1968 and requested a position aboard any ship going anywhere. Richards became agitated when asked for a contact address in Japan and refused to divulge his Japanese residence. The # 7 described Richards as 5' 10" tall, 155 pounds, with brown hair, a receding hairline on both sides, and a not very prominent scar two and one-half inches long traversing the center forehead, his most outstanding characteristic being a disconcerting, idiotic grin resembling a constant grimace. According to Richards' documents and statements, he was born 8 April 1937; applied for seaman's papers in San Pedro, California, 16 June 1964 and registered there as a United States National Maritime Union member on 21 February 1968 but never shipped out. His Social Security Number is 562-46-5078; his United States Coast Guard Number Z 2711-782.

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B. A subsequent check with the #9 confirmed the biographic data supplied by the #7. A ward check indicated that Richards originally resided in Japan from 1963 to 1964 and married TAKAYAMA Michiko in 1963. Both Richards and his wife left Japan for the United States in 1964. Richards returned alone to Japan about 15 April 1968. His wife's address in the United States is listed as 160 Hosoi (phonetic) Street, Carpinteria, California, 93013.

C. A photograph of Richards obtained from the #9 was shown to the #7 and identified by him as the individual in subparagraph 1A above who had applied for a seaman's berth. The photograph of Richards bears no apparent resemblance to photographs of suspected assassin James Earl Ray provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

2. The above information has been given to the Legal Attache of the United States Embassy in _____

FOR THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR PLANS:

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#6
(8 May 1968)

Distribution:

2 - Addressee
1 -
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#2